

ARTIST TO HIS

FINGERTIPS

AN hour spent in the company of Richard Maitland, whose exhibition of paintings and mobiles concluded recently at the Terrace Studio in the Ashoka Hotel, is exhilarating, indeed. Of a family of artists connected with the world of the theatre and music, he is an artist to his fingertips. Remarkable as a painter and sculptor, he is dynamic as a dancer. What he does not know of dancing is really not worth knowing. No wonder as he is the pupil of the Olympian Choreographer, Martha Graham, and had the privilege of being associated with Ruth St. Denis, whose name has become a legend. And he has been fifteen years in the line.

When Pollux went to see him, he was giving lessons to a bunch of little ballerinas of all shapes, hues, ages and nationalities. The scene reminded Pollux of the ballet studies of Degas and Renoir.

As he showed the steps to the precocious little Filipino girl Espania Nanas, in certain poses he seemed to be a piece of vibrant mobile sculpture. Later, he showed the distinctive **Richard Maitland** movements of the classic ballet, the innovations introduced by Martha Graham, and the latest trend called free style. He himself is an exponent of free style dancing which is eclectic and expressive in character. Some time ago, he presented to Delhi audiences a composition on modern civilisation. On Saturday last at the Alliance Francaise Ball, he produced his latest composition, a revue of dancing and theatre in Paris through the ages from the period of Louis XIV to the roaring 'twenties. In the *cancan* recitals in particular, he captured the mood of Moulin Rouge at its glory. With its colourful costumes and variety of dance styles, it will go down as "the show of shows," to be cherished for a long time to come.

